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Chairman Joe Barton
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This is the third of our hearings on the Environmental Protection Agency's proposed revisions to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Today, we will hear from prominent state and local elected officials--the people who are the front line of the Clean Air effort, as it is the states and localities that are primarily responsible for implementing clean air standards.

First, though, I want to spend a few moments reviewing what this Committee **has** heard to date. Our Committee first heard from present and former chairmen of the Clean Air Science Advisory Committee. They had very interesting views on the current state of the scientific basis for these proposed standards. For ozone, CASAC said that moving to an eight hour averaging time was appropriate, yet CASAC could not reach consensus on what level that standard should be. Instead, CASAC said that it was a policy call by the Administrator.

For particulate matter, CASAC said that a PM2.5 standard should be adopted but, again, CASAC could not agree on a particular form or level. Instead, the majority of

CASAC members favored levels at the upper end of the range EPA proposed and again said that it was a policy call by the Administrator. Prompted in part by these uncertainties, the CASAC witnesses agreed that a **PM2.5** proposal could be delayed if an intensive research program and monitoring network was established, and a review of the standard was conducted in five years.

Our second hearing focused on the interagency review process. Our review of federal agency comments revealed that these agencies had significant concerns about the science underlying the proposals and the costs and disruptions in lifestyle they would cause. There was also testimony that the shortened review process led to an inadequate review of the costs and benefits of the proposal.

Today, as I noted earlier, we hear from the front line of those responsible for ensuring clean air: state and local officials. Once EPA in Washington sets the air quality standards, it is up to the states and localities to develop the implementation and control strategies necessary to bring their area into compliance. These are the people who must struggle with those decisions, who feel the economic impact, who must act in the absence of current technology to achieve these proposed standards. Given all the uncertainties raised during our first two hearings, it is vitally important that we hear from these witnesses about the real, front line effects of EPA's proposal.

I look forward with enthusiasm to their testimony.